

CHRIST'S PRAYER AND PLEA NO. 3280

A SERMON
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*"Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust."
Psalm 16:1*

I BELIEVE that we have in this verse a prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some portions of this Psalm cannot apply to anyone but the Savior. And we have the examples of Peter and Paul to warrant us in saying that in this Psalm, David spoke of Jesus Christ. There is no apparent division in the Psalm, so that as one part of it refers most distinctly to Christ, we are justified in concluding that the whole of it refers to Him and belongs to Him!

But we know that whatever belongs to Christ belongs also to all His people because of their vital union with Him, so we shall treat the text, first, *as our Savior's own prayer*. And then, secondly, we shall regard it also as *the prayer of the followers of the Lamb*.

I. So, first, we will take these words as OUR SAVIOR'S OWN PRAYER.

"Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust." And we will divide the text at once into two parts *the prayer itself*, "Preserve me, O God." And *the argument or plea*, "for in thee do I put my trust."

In considering these words as Christ's prayer, does it not immediately strike you as a very singular thing that Christ should pray at all? It is most certain that He was "very God of very God," that, "Word," who was in the beginning with God, and who was Himself God, the great Creator "without whom was not anything made that was made."

But without in any degree taking away His glory and dignity as God, we must never forget that He was just as truly man, one of the great family of mankind, and "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Though He remained sinless, He "was in all points tempted like as we are."

Being, therefore, man, and intending to make Himself not only the atoning sacrifice for His people, but also a perfect example that they might imitate, it became needful that He should pray. What would a Christian be without prayer, and how could a Christ who never prayed be an example to a Christian? Yet notwithstanding the fact that it was necessary, it was marvelously condescending on our Savior's part. The Son of God, with strong crying and tears making known His requests unto His Father, is one of the greatest marvels in all the ages. What a wondrous stoop it was that Jesus, the unsinning Son of God, the thrice-holy One, the Anointed, the Christ for whom prayer is to be made continually, should Himself have prayed to His Father!

Yet, while there is much condescension in this fact, there is also much comfort in it. When I kneel in prayer, it is a great consolation to me to know that where I bow before the Lord, there is the print of my Savior's knees. When my cry goes up to heaven, it goes along the road which Christ's cry once traveled. He cleared away all impediments so that now my prayer may follow in the track of His. Be comforted, Christian, if you have to pray in dark and stormy nights, with the thought that your Master did the same.

*"Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witness'd the fervor of His prayer;
The decent His temptation knew,
His conflict and His victory too."*

If you have to pray in sore agony of spirit fearing that God has forsaken you, remember that Christ has gone further even than that into the depths of anguish in prayer, for He cried in Gethsemane, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In addition to being condescending and comforting, this fact of our Savior praying shows the intimable communion there is between Christ and all the members of His mystical body. It is not only we who have to pray, but He who is our Head bowed in august majesty before the throne of grace. Throughout the narratives of the four evangelists, one is struck with the many times that mention is made of Christ's prayers. At His baptism, it was while He was praying that "the heaven was opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

On another occasion, we read that, "as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." On the mount of transfiguration, "as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering."

Jesus was emphatically "a man of prayer." After a long day of teaching the people and healing the sick, instead of seeking repose, He would spend the whole night in prayer to God or at another time, rising up a great while before day, He would depart into a solitary place and there pray for the needed strength for the new day's duties.

Having thus noticed the fact of Christ's praying, I want now to call your attention to the particular prayer in our text, and I ask you first to observe that it is addressed to God in a peculiar aspect. You do not see this in our translation, but in the Hebrew it is, "Preserve me, O El." That is one of the names of God and the same name that the Savior used when He cried, "Eloi, Eloi, lame sabachthani?" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Many Christians seem to have only one name for God, but the Hebrew saints had many titles for the one living and true God.

Worldlings generally talk of "The Almighty" as though His only characteristic was the omnipotent might which is displayed in great storms on the sea or terrible calamities on the land. But our Savior, whose knowledge of God was perfect, here selects a name of God peculiarly suitable to the condition in which He was when He offered this prayer, for according to most commentators, the word, "El," means, "The strong One." So it is weakness crying to the Strong for strength, "Preserve me, O You who are so strong, so mighty, that You uphold all things by the word of Your power."

Others say that "El" means "The Ever-present One." This is a delightful name for God, and one that is most appropriate for a believer to use when he is in peril on land or sea, in the den of lions or in the burning fiery furnace, "O You ever-present One, preserve me!" JEHOVAH is indeed "a very present help in trouble." I wish we could acquire a more intimate knowledge of the divine character so that in calling upon Him in prayer, we could seek the aid of that special attribute which we need to have exercised on our behalf.

What a blessed title is that of Shaddai which Bunyan uses in his *Holy War*—El Shaddai, God all-sufficient or as some render it, "The many-breasted God," the God with a great abundance of heart, full of mercy and grace, and supplying the needs of all His children out of His own fullness! Then take the other names or titles of God, JEHOVAH-Nissi, JEHOVAH-Shammah, JEHOVAH-Shalom, JEHOVAH-Tsidkenu, and any others that you can find, and think how much better we could pray if, instead of always saying, "O Lord!" or "O God!" we appealed to Him under some title which indicates the attribute which we desired to be exerted on our behalf.

Next notice that this is a prayer produced by an evident sense of weakness. The suppliant feels that he cannot preserve himself. We believe that the human nature of Christ was altogether free from any tendency to sin and that it never did sin in any sense whatsoever. Yet still, the Savior here appears not to rely upon the natural purity of His nature, but He turns away from that which might seem to us to be a good subject for reliance in order to show that He would have nothing to do with self-righteousness, just

as He wishes us to have nothing to do with it. The perfect Savior prays, "Preserve me, O God." So, beloved, let us also pray this prayer for ourselves.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was without any tendency to sin, put Himself under the shadow of the almighty wings, then shall I wickedly and presumptuously dare to go into danger trusting to my own integrity and relying upon my own strength of will? God forbid that you or I should ever act thus. Jesus was only weak because He had assumed our nature, yet in His weakness there was no tendency to sin. But our weakness is linked with a continual liability to evil, so if Jesus prayed, "Preserve me, O God," with what earnestness should each one of us cry unto the Lord, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe".

I remark, next, that this prayer on the lips of Christ, appeals for a promised blessing. "What!" says someone, "is there anywhere in God's Word a promise that Christ shall be preserved?" Oh, yes! Turn to the prophecy of Isaiah, the forty-ninth chapter, and the seventh and following verses, and there read, "Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose you. Thus saith the LORD, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and *I will preserve thee*, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages."

When the Savior prayed this prayer, He could remind His Father of the promise given through Isaiah, and say to Him, "Thou hast said, 'I will preserve thee.' Do as thou hast said, O my Father!"

Beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, let us learn from our Savior's example to plead the promises of God when we go to Him in prayer. Praying without a promise is like going to war without a weapon. God is so gracious that He may yield to our entreaties even when He has not given a definite promise concerning what we are asking at His hands. But going to Him with one of His own promises is like going to a bank with a check, He must honor His own promise. We speak reverently, yet very confidently upon this point. To be consistent with His own character, He must fulfill His own Word which He has spoken. So, when you approach the throne of grace, search out the promise that applies to your case and plead it with your heavenly Father, and then expect that He will do as He has said.

Observe, next, that this prayer of Christ obtained an abundant answer. You recollect the many preservations which He experienced, how He was preserved while yet a child, from the envy and malice of Herod and how again and again He was delivered from those who sought His life. He was also preserved many times from falling into the snares set for Him by scribes and Pharisees, and others who sought to entrap Him in His talk. How wisely He answered the lawyer who came to Him tempting Him, and those who sought to catch Him over the matter of paying tribute to Caesar! He was never taken as a bird ensnared by the fowler. He was always preserved in every emergency. He was like a physician in a hospital full of lepers, yet He was always preserved from the contagion.

Then, to close this part of the subject, notice that this prayer most deeply concerns the whole company of believers in Christ, for it strikes me that when our Savior prayed to His Father, "Preserve me," He was thinking of the whole of His mystical body and pleading for all who were vitally united to Him.

You remember how, in His great intercessory supplication, He pleaded for His disciples, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." This is the same prayer as, "Preserve me," if we understand the "me" to include all who are one with Christ. We also are included in that supplication, for He further said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Yes, dear friend, though you may seem to yourself to be the lowest of the Lord's people, even though you are in your own apprehension but as His feet that glow in the furnace of affliction, even you are among those whom Christ entreated His Father to keep, and you may rest assured that He will certainly do so. Christ will never lose one of the members of His mystical body.

If He could do so, His body would be imperfect and incomplete, but that it never can be. Paul tells us that Christ's church "is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all," so that if He were left without His fullness, He would have suffered an irreparable loss. That can never be the case, so this prayer will be answered concerning the whole body of believers in Jesus, who shall be presented "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Blessed be His holy name!

Let us now turn to the plea which Christ urged in support of His prayer: "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust." Did Christ put His trust in His Father? We surely need to ask the question and we know at once what the answer must be. In the matter of faith, as in everything else, He is a perfect example to His people and we cannot imagine a Christian without faith. Faith is the very life of a true believer in Jesus. Indeed, without faith he is not a believer, so Christ was his model in this respect as well as in every other.

The words, "in thee do I put my trust," may be translated, "in thee do I shelter." There is in them an allusion to running under something for shelter. In fact, the best figure I can use to give you the meaning of this sentence is that of the chicks running under the wings of the hen for shelter. Just so do we hide ourselves under the overshadowing wings of the Eternal. As a man, Christ used this plea with God, that He was sheltering from all evil under the divine wings of power, and wisdom, and goodness, and truth. This is an accurate interpretation of the passage, and there are many instances recorded in Scripture in which Christ really did this.

Take, for instance that remarkable declaration in Psalm 22:9, "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts," as though very early in life, probably far earlier than any of us were brought to know the Lord, Jesus Christ was exercising hope in the Most High.

Then again, in the fiftieth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, we have these words, which must refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." That verse is immediately followed by this one, "For the LORD God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." These words were peculiarly appropriate from the lips of Christ, yet each one of His followers may also say, "The LORD God will help me."

Even in His last agonies Christ uttered words which plainly prove that He had put His trust in God, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." There is more faith in that final commendation of His soul to His Father than some of you might imagine, for it takes great faith to be able to speak thus in the circumstance in which Christ was then placed. Not only was He suffering the terrible pangs that were inseparable from death by crucifixion, but He had to bear the still greater grief that was His portion when His Father's face was withdrawn from Him because He was in the place of sinners and therefore, had to endure the separation from God which was their due. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" and this was what Jesus actually did.

What wondrous faith it was that trusted in God even when He said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts!" Yet even then Jesus turned to His Father and said, "Father into thy hands I commend My spirit. I commit Myself into the hand that wields the sword of infallible justice. Into the hand that has crushed Me and broken Me in pieces." Talk of faith, did you ever hear of such sublime confidence as that having been displayed by anyone else?

When a martyr has to lay down his life for the truth, his faith is sustained by the comforting presence of God. He believes in the God who is smiling upon him even while he is in the midst of the fire. But Christ on the cross trusted in the God who had forsaken Him. O beloved, imitate this faith as far as it is possible in your case! What a glorious height of confidence Jesus reached. Oh, that we may have grace to follow where He has so blessedly led the way!

I want you carefully to notice the argument that is contained in Christ's plea, "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust." Christ, as God, had felt the power of that plea, so He knew that His Father would also feel the power of it. You remember that Jesus said to the woman of Canaan, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Her faith prevailed with Him and He felt that His faith would prevail with His Father, so that when He said, "In thee do I put my trust," He knew that He would obtain the preservation for which He pleaded. Jesus never forgot that the rule of the kingdom is, "According to your faith be it done unto you." He knew that we must "ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." So Jesus came to His Father with this plea, "I do trust in You, I have absolute confidence in You, therefore I pray You to preserve Me."

My dear brother or sister in Christ, can you say the same? Can you look up to God and say, "In thee do I put my trust"? If so, you may use it as Christ used it in pleading with His Father. Perhaps you have gazed upon a weapon that has been wielded by some great warrior. If you had that weapon in your hand and were going forth to fight, you would feel, "I must not be a coward while I am grasping a brave man's sword, but I must play the man with it as he did." Well, you have in your grasp the very weapon which Christ used when He gained the victory. You can go before God with the very same argument that Christ used with His Father and He will hear your plea even as He heard Christ's. "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust."

II. I had intended, in the second place, to speak of my text as THE PRAYER OF CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS.

But instead of preaching upon it as I would have done had time permitted, I will merely give you a few notes upon it, and then you can preach the second sermon yourselves by practicing it as you go your several ways to your homes.

First, *what does this prayer mean to a believer?* It means that you put yourself and all belonging to you under divine protection. Before you close your eyes, pray this prayer, "'Preserve me, O God.' Preserve my body, my family, my house from fire, from famine, from hurt or harm of every kind." Specially present the prayer in a spiritual sense. Preserve me from the world. Let me not be carried away with its excitements. Suffer me not to bow before its blandishments, nor to fear its frowns.

Preserve me from the devil. Let him not tempt me above what I am able to bear. Preserve me from myself, keep me from growing envious, selfish, high-minded, proud, slothful. Preserve me from those evils into which I see others run and preserve me from those evils into which I am myself most apt to run. Keep me from evils known and from evils unknown. 'Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me.'

This is a prayer which is more comprehensive in the original than it is in our version. It may be translated, "Save me," and this is a prayer that is suitable for many here. Those of you who have never prayed before can begin with this prayer, "Save me, O strong One! It will indeed need a strong One to save me, for I am so far gone that nothing but omnipotence can save me."

It may also be rendered, "Keep me," or "Guard me." It is the word which we should use in speaking of the bodyguard of a king or of shepherds protecting their flocks. It is a prayer which you may keep on using from the time you begin to know the Lord until you get to heaven and then you will only need to alter Jude's Doxology very slightly, and say, "Unto him who has kept us from falling, and presented us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Next, *when is this prayer suitable?* Well, it is suitable at this moment. You do not know what dangers you will meet with before you go to your bed tonight. Take special care when you come to what you consider the safe parts of the road, for you will probably be most in danger when you think you are in no danger at all. It is often a greater peril not to be tempted than to be tempted.

This prayer is suitable to some of you who are going into a new situation, where you will have new responsibilities, new duties, and probably new trials and difficulties. In the old days of superstition, people were foolish enough to wear charms of various kinds to guard them from evil, but such a prayer as this is better than all their charms. If your pathway should lie through the enchanted fields or even

through the valley of death-shade, you need not be afraid, but may march boldly on with this prayer on your lips, "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust."

Then, *in what spirit ought this prayer to be offered?* It should be offered in a spirit of deep humility. Do not pray, "Preserve me, O God," as though you felt that you were a very precious person. It is true that God regards you as one of His jewels if you are a believer in Jesus, but you are not to regard yourself as a jewel. Think of yourself as a brand plucked from the burning and then you will pray with due humility.

Pray as a poor feeble creature who must be destroyed unless God shall preserve you. Pray as if you were a sheep that had been shorn and that needed to have the wind tempered to it. Pray as a drowning man might pray, "Preserve me, O God." Pray as sinking Peter prayed, "Lord, save me," for so you shall be preserved even as he was.

With what motive ought you to pray this prayer? Pray it especially out of hatred to sin. Whenever you think of sin, the best thing you can do is to pray, "Preserve me, O God." Whenever you hear or read of others doing wrong, do not begin to plume yourself upon your own excellence, but cry at once, "Preserve me, O God, or it may be that I shall sin even as those others have done." If this night you are a Christian, the praise for this is not to be given to yourself, but to the Lord who has made you to differ from others. You are only what His grace has made you, so show how highly you value that grace by asking for more and more of it.

This must suffice concerning the prayer of the text, for I must, in closing, remind you of the plea and ask if each one here is able to use it, "Preserve me, O God: *for in thee do I put my trust.*" Can you, my friend, urge this plea with God tonight? Perhaps you say that you could do so years ago. Then why not put your trust in the Lord now?

It is present faith that you need in your present perils and you cannot pray acceptably without faith, "For he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." You know what it is to trust a friend and perhaps to be deceived, but do you know what it is to trust in God and not be deceived? Are you trusting for salvation only to Christ? Do you sing,

***"You, O Christ, are all I want,
More than all in You I find"?***

Is this your plea continually? Are you always trusting in God in the dark as well as in the light? Many a man thinks he is strong until he begins to put forth his strength and then he finds that it is utter weakness. There are many who fancy they are full of faith until they try to exercise it, and then they realize how little they have. They are fine soldiers when there is no fighting, and splendid sailors as long as they are on dry land, but such faith as that is of little service when some great emergency arises. The faith we need is that firm confidence which sings,

***"His love in time past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sin;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through."***

If that is the kind of faith you have, you need not fear to pray, "Preserve me, O God," for He will be as a wall of fire round about you to guard you from all evil. And though you are now in the midst of those who would drag you down to their level if they could, or turn you aside from the paths of righteousness, the Lord, in whom you have put your trust, will never leave you, nor forsake you, but will bring you in His own good time to that blessed place of which He has told you in His Word. And there,

***"Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in,"***

you shall be preserved from all evil forever, and faith shall be blessedly exchanged for sight. God grant that everyone of us may be able to pray the prayer of our text, and to use the plea, "Preserve me, O God: for in you have I put my trust," for Jesus' sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

JOHN 17

Can there be found in all the records of mankind, in all the documents that have ever been preserved, anything that can match this record of our Savior's great intercessory prayer? He seems to pray here as if He already stood within the veil, not pleading in agony as He did in the garden of Gethsemane, but speaking with that authority with which He is clothed now that His work on earth is done.

There is as much of the divine as of the human in this prayer, and it is remarkable that in it our Lord does not make any confession of sin on account of His people. He does not come before God, as it were, in *forma pauperis*, with many pleas, but the burden of His prayer is that He may be glorified, and that His Father may be glorified in Him.

The words of the prayer are among the most simple that could have been selected, but oh, the depths that lie hidden beneath them! I do not think that this side of heaven any of us can know to the full the meaning of this wondrous chapter. May the Holy Spirit graciously grant us a glimpse of the glorious truths that are revealed here!

Verse 1. *These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven,*

Not His hands, as we do who are poor suppliants, but His eyes, indicating where His thoughts went. He "lifted up his eyes to heaven."

1. *And said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.*

No mere man would have dared to pray such a prayer as this. Jesus asks that He may be glorified by His Father that He also may glorify His Father. He put the two things together, "Father, glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee." This is not a plea that is fit for merely human lips. It is Jesus, the Son of God, who, in receiving glory from His Father, is also able to return it to His Father.

2-3. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* [See Sermon #2396, Volume 41—Eternal Life!]

See how He puts Himself side by side with God as no mere man might dare to do? Only He who was equal with the Father could venture to plead thus, claiming power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him. Here we learn that it is eternal life to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

4. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

"My teaching is all done, My ministry is finished, and though there are still some arrears of suffering, yet those shall be fully discharged in due time. 'I have finished the work which you gave me to do.'"

5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

You must try and think of who it is that is thus pleading, for so you will get at least some faint idea of the intercession of our great High Priest in heaven, for after this fashion He still prays to His Father before the eternal throne of God.

6. *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word.*

"They were Yours, my Father, under Your direct government, but You have transferred them to My mediatorial sovereignty, and You have given them up to be Mine in a very special sense, beyond all the rest of mankind, and this is one of their distinguishing characteristics, that 'they have kept thy word.'"

7-8. *Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them,*

Is it so with You, dear friend? Have You received Christ's words, the very words which the Father gave to Him, and which He has in His turn given to you? O soul, you are indeed happy if this is the case with you! "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them,"

8-9. *And have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world,* [See Sermon #2331, Christ's Pastoral Prayer For His People]

That is, not in the same special sense as He prays for His people, not with that personal pleading which He offers on behalf of His own chosen ones, "I pray not for the world,"

9. *But for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*

In the sixth verse, Jesus had said to His Father, "Yours they were." And here, in this ninth verse, He says, "They are thine." They still belonged to the Father, the transference of them mediatorially to the Son having made no change in the Father's relation to them.

10. *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*

I can understand a man saying to God, "All mine are thine." But no man, unless he is something more than man, dares to say to God, "Thine are mine." But Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, gives all that He has to God, and all that God has belongs to Him, so that He can truly say, "All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."

11. *And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*

It has been well said that this expression, "My Father," is a binding up of the Old and New Testaments in one. The Old Testament reveals the holiness of God, but it is the New Testament that is peculiarly the revelation of God as the Father. We put the two together, as Jesus does, and thus He speaks, "Holy Father, make my people one, and keep them one." Let us close up our ranks, brethren. Let us love each other more and as Christ has prayed that we may be one, let us constantly seek to manifest our oneness among the sons of men.

12-17. *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth:* [See Sermon #1890, Our Lord's Prayer For His People's Sanctification]

How wondrously our Savior's prayer advances! He asks for His people's unity. He asks for their joy. He asks for their preservation. And now He asks for their purification, their sanctification, "Sanctify them through thy truth."

17-20. *Thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone,*

"For these who are already converted, I pray also for those who are not yet called by grace."

20-22. *But for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them;*

Who among us knows the full meaning of that wondrous declaration? "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them."

22-23. *That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, and thou hast loved me.* [See Sermon #1472, The Glory, Unity, and Triumph of the Church].

What a glorious assurance is that! It amazes us to know that the Father has loved us even as He loved His Son.

24-26. *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.* [See Sermons #1378, The Righteous Father Known and Loved, and #1667, "Love and I"—A Mystery]

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